

IRS News Release

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IRS Chief Counsel Announces New Executive Appointments

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WASHINGTON — Internal Revenue Service Chief Counsel Donald L. Korb has announced the following Senior Executive Service moves:

- Deputy Chief Counsel (Operations) Donald T. Rocen will retire effective July 27, 2007. Rocen joined the Office of Chief Counsel in May 2004 as Special Counsel to the Chief Counsel after serving in the Washington, D.C. office of PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLP. Rocen previously served as Assistant to IRS Commissioner Lawrence Gibbs from 1986 to 1989 and, before that, beginning in 1971, held a variety of positions in the Office of Chief Counsel over a span of 15 years.
- Small Business/Self-Employed Area Counsel H. Stephen Kesselman will replace Rocen as Deputy Chief Counsel (Operations). Kesselman has over 35 years of experience as a litigator, manager and executive with the Office of Chief Counsel in several field offices. He earned a B.A. from Lafayette College in 1968 and J.D. from Rutgers University in 1971. Kesselman is also an adjunct faculty member at Villanova University Law School's Graduate Tax Division.
- Associate Chief Counsel (Financial Institutions and Products) Lon B. Smith will undertake a new assignment as the National Counsel to the Chief Counsel for Special Projects. Smith will serve as the principal focal point for some of the most critical projects and initiatives of the Office of Chief Counsel. Smith has served as an attorney in positions of progressive responsibility with the Office of Chief Counsel for nearly 30 years. He received his B.A. from the University of Rochester in 1974, J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh Law School in 1977 and LL.M in taxation from Georgetown University in 1986.

"Don Rocen has been a close friend for over three decades and his tax expertise, consummate professionalism and wonderful sense of humor will be sorely missed in our office," said Korb. "Don's three years of service as my Deputy Chief Counsel (Operations) was another major milestone in an enormously successful career in tax law in both the public and the private sectors."

After Rocen leaves the Office of Chief Counsel, he will continue his career with the Washington law firm of Miller & Chevalier.

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"I am delighted that Steve Kesselman, one of our top senior attorneys with a wealth of field experience, will join the front office in Washington as Deputy Chief Counsel following Don's departure," said Korb. "I am particularly pleased that I am able to fill the Deputy Chief Counsel's position from within our current executive ranks. Steve is a great example of why the Office of Chief Counsel is not only a great place to start a tax career, but also a great place to spend a career in tax as well."

"I am also pleased that Lon Smith has agreed to join the front office as the National Counsel to the Chief Counsel for Special Projects," said Korb. "His leadership skills will enable him to fulfill a vitally important role in coordinating a number of cross-office activities, helping us to institutionalize the changes we have been making to the Office of Chief Counsel over the past three years, and helping with the oversight of our major initiatives during the remainder of my term as Chief Counsel and beyond. Lon's outstanding experience and seasoned judgment as both a tax lawyer and executive will be extraordinarily helpful as we continue to shape the Office of Chief Counsel to meet our client's current and future legal needs."

Smith will continue as the Associate Chief Counsel (Financial Institutions and Products) until a replacement is named.

Within the next week or two, an announcement will be published on USAjobs.

"We are looking for someone who will be able to build on the changes Lon has made in redirecting the efforts of FIP. As I announced previously, FIP not only reacquired the branch responsible for tax-exempt bonds, but it also realigned its other branches to create one branch that would focus on transactions in the field and one that would identify and address new financial products as soon as they enter the marketplace. The goal of the realignment is to provide faster and more informed legal support to the Commissioner, to become more current with new developments in the financial markets, and to resolve the most current legal issues, while maintaining a commitment to our more traditional work arising in the published guidance and letter ruling programs," said Korb.